

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The claims are 5 and 8-20. Claims 12, 17 and 19-20 have been amended to better define the invention or to improve their form. Support may be found, *inter alia*, in the original drawings. Reconsideration is expressly requested.

Claims 19 and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite in lacking sufficient antecedent basis for the limitation "the centering grooves." In response, Applicants have amended claims 19 and 20 to provide such antecedent basis. It is respectfully submitted that all currently pending claims fully comply with 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, and Applicants respectfully request that the rejection on this basis be withdrawn.

Claims 13-16 were allowed and the Examiner indicated that claim 10 contains allowable subject matter; however, the Examiner withdrew claims 21-24 from consideration as directed to a non-elected species and rejected the remaining claims 5, 8, 9, 11, 12 and 17-20 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by *Perrow*

U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2001/0049309 for the reasons set forth on pages 3-4 of the Office Action.

In response, Applicants have amended claims 12 and 17 to better define the invention, have canceled claims 21-24 without prejudice, and respectfully traverse the Examiner's rejection for the following reasons.

As set forth in claims 12 and 17 as amended, Applicants' invention provides a sliding articulation having an axis that includes, *inter alia*, one single cage disposed between an outer hub and an inner hub guiding a plurality of balls in an axial direction. As recited in claim 12 as amended, the cage is freely displaceable relative to the inner hub and relative to the outer hub in the axial direction. As recited in claim 17 as amended, the cage is pivotable with respect to only one of the outer hub or the inner hub.

Perrow fails to disclose or suggest a sliding articulation in which one single cage is disposed between the outer hub and the inner hub guiding a plurality of balls in an axial direction. Rather, *Perrow* discloses a constant velocity joint having an

intermediate cage 48 and an outer cage 38 which are formed separately from each other (See paragraph [0029] of *Perrow*), which requires additional steps of producing the second cage and mounting the two cages together within the joint and a very precise bearing face has to be provided between the intermediate cage and the outer cage with *Perrow's* arrangement.

Moreover, as recited in Applicants' claim 12 as amended, the cage is freely displaceable relative to the inner hub and relative to the outer hub in the axial direction as can be taken from Applicants' drawings. This feature means that the cage is not limited in its movement relative to the inner and outer hubs. The only limitation of the axial movement is provided by the balls abutting to the stops within the articulation.

In contrast, the intermediate cage together with the outer cage of *Perrow* are not free to be displaced relative to the inner and outer hubs. As can be taken from paragraph [0032] of *Perrow*, abutting surfaces of the inner race and the intermediate cage are provided as shown in FIG. 3. Thus, the axial displacement of the cage is limited by the abutting surfaces, which differs from any limitation of the articulation according to Applicants' sliding

articulation as recited in claim 12 as amended, which limitation is provided by the balls instead of the cage.

As recited in Applicants' claim 17 as amended, the cage is pivotable with respect to only one of the outer hub or the inner hub. In contrast, the outer cage in the *Perrow* citation is pivotable with respect to both the outer hub and the inner hub. It is only the intermediate cage which is not pivotable with respect to the inner hub in *Perrow's* arrangement; however, it is respectfully submitted that the intermediate cage of *Perrow* cannot be interpreted as a cage as defined in Applicants' claim 17 as amended, wherein the cage is a member guiding the balls. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the Examiner's statement that the features of claim 17 are fully anticipated by the *Perrow's* citation is incorrect.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claims 12 and 17 as amended, together with claims 5 and 8-11, which depend on claim 12 as amended, and claims 18-20, which depend on claim 17 as amended, are patentable over *Perrow* together with claims 10 and 13-16, which the Examiner has indicated contain allowable subject matter.

In summary, claims 12, 17 and 19-20 have been amended, and claims 21-24 have been canceled. In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully requested that the claims be allowed and that this case be passed to issue.

Respectfully submitted,
Werner JACOB ET AL. - 3 PCT

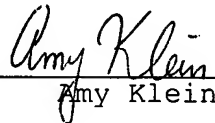
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